

JOURNAL
OF THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL.



Vol. LXIII. Part II.—NATURAL SCIENCE.

No. II.—1894.

Noviciæ Indiæ VII. *Description of a new species of Meconopsis from Sikkim.*—By D. PRAIN.

[Received March 31st—Read April 4th.]

Among the novelties obtained by the collectors working under Dr. King's supervision in the Eastern Himalaya since the publication of the first volume of Sir J. D. Hooker's *Flora of British India*, one of the most interesting and elegant is a small species of *Meconopsis* collected in two localities near the Nepal frontier in 1888. Seeds of this plant were sent by Dr. King to Europe in that year, but unfortunately none of the numerous foreign correspondents of the Royal Botanic Garden appear to have succeeded in raising plants, and though the species has been carefully looked for since, it has not again been met with. When it is at length obtained it is likely to prove a very acceptable addition to European and North American horticulture. It has been the writer's intention for some years to publish the results of a critical study of the Indian *Papaveraceæ*, but the pressure of more urgent duties has hitherto prevented the completion of his notes. As, however, members of the Society and others, in annually increasing numbers, make tours in Sikkim, it seems better no longer to defer the publication of a description of this species so as to make its recognition possible to those who—and all who can use the work should—take with them on their journey a copy of the *Flora of British India*. To the brief diagnosis, in which its place among the species described in that work is shewn, a full botanical account is appended.

MECONOPSIS VIGUIER.

(Flor. Brit. Ind. i. 118.)

* Scapes radical, one-flowered.

† Leaves pinnatisect.

1. * MECONOPSIS BELLA Prain; quite glabrous.

ALPINE HIMALAYA: Western Sikkim and Eastern Nepal; alt. 12-14,000 feet; *Dr. King's collectors!*

Root stout, fusiform; neck clothed with sheaths. Leaves many, 2-4 in. long, petioled, 2-3-jugately imparipinnatisect. Scapes slender, numerous, glabrous. Flowers 2-3 in. diam., pale blue. Petals 4-5. Ovary globose, style short, stigmas 5. Capsule obovoid, $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ in.; seeds with lax reticulated testa.

† † Leaves subentire or entire.

1. M. SIMPLICIFOLIA H. f. & T.; softly hairy.

2. M. HORRIDULA H. f. & T.; prickly.

* * Stems leafy. Flowers racemed or panicle.

3. M. ACULEATA Royle, etc., as in "F. B. I."

MECONOPSIS BELLA *perennis*; glaberrima; rhizomate minimo digito crasso collo extruso et vaginis foliorum anni antecedentis vestito; foliis omnibus radicalibus longe petiolatis, glabris; petioli margine ad basin versus in vaginam membranaceam dilatato; lamina circumscriptione ovato-lanceolata, 2-3-jugim imparipinnatisecta, segmentis 3-partitis, lobulis ovato-obtusis; scapis numerosis gracilioribus, simplicibus, 1-floris; floribus majusculis coeruleis, sepalis 2, petalis 4-5, staminibus ∞ (circa 80); ovario ovato, placentis 4-5, stylo distincto, stigmatibus radiatim 4-5-lobis; capsula substipitata, obovoidea; seminibus numerosis testa laxa reticulatis et pseudostrophiolatis, embryo basilari parvo.

In Himalaya orientali: Sikkim, in tractu Jongri apud Pe-kiang-la, circa 12,000 p. s. m., et in Nyegu ad fines Nepalie orientales, 14,000 p. s. m., *Kingii mercenar.!* In mense Julio floret.

Rhizomate 12 cm. longo, hoc 1.5 cm. crasso, parte subaërio plus quam 2 cm.; foliorum, iis *Corydalis leptocarpæ* similium, petiolo 6-10 cm. longo, lamina 2.5 cm. longa hoc 1-1.5 cm. lata, lobulis 5 mm. longis his 3 mm. latis; scapis 6-10 cm. longis; sepalis 12 mm. longis, his 8 mm. latis, ovatis; petalis 30 mm. longis, his 20 mm. latis, ovato-rotundatis; staminibus filamentis filiformibus 6 mm. longis glabris, antheribus (e sp. sicco aureis) 2.5 mm. longis, vix 1 mm. latis, oblongis; ovario 5 mm. longo, stylo 3 mm. longo; capsula matura 15 mm. longa obpyriformi in stipite 4 mm. longo attenuata; seminibus 1.25 mm. longis, 3. mm. latis.

Nulli speciei *Meconopsisidis* adhuc descriptæ arcte affinis.